

HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

Planning for growth and development requires the consideration of a wide range of public safety issues. Safety hazards are naturally induced, such as seismic and geologic hazards, flooding, and wildland fire hazards. Some hazards are the result of natural hazards that are exacerbated by human activity and alteration of the natural environment, such as dam failure, urban fires, and development in sensitive areas such as floodplains or areas subject to erosion and landslides. Finally, some hazards are manmade, including airport crash hazards, hazardous materials, and crime. In addition to safety issues related to hazardous conditions, the planning process should account for other issues related to community health and safety, such as noise exposure.

Many of the health and safety risks associated with development can be avoided through locational decisions made at the planning stages of development, while others may be lessened through the use of mitigation measures in the planning and land use regulation process. This element outlines Fresno County's strategy for ensuring the maintenance of a healthy and safe physical environment.

The Health and Safety Element is divided into seven sections: Emergency Management and Response; Fire Hazards; Flood Hazards; Seismic and Geological Hazards; Airport Hazards; Hazardous Materials; and Noise.

A. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE

Although Fresno County seeks to minimize hazards and reduce safety risks, in the event of an emergency, quick and effective response is vital. The County's Emergency Response Program is designed to respond to a wide range of emergency situations.

Policies in this section seek to create an effective emergency response and management system for Fresno County through periodic evaluation of the Emergency Response Program, by ensuring that vital public infrastructure is designed to remain operational during and after a major disaster event, by siting critical emergency response facilities as far from potential disaster impact areas as is practical, and through continuing public education and outreach on emergency preparedness and disaster response programs. Related policies are included in Section PF-H, Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services.

Goal HS-A To protect public health and safety by preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the effects of natural or technological disasters.

Policies

Policy HS-A.1 The County shall, through the Fresno County Operational Area Master Emergency Services Plan, maintain the capability to effectively respond to emergency incidents, including maintenance of an emergency operations center.

Definitions for the Health and Safety Element

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone: A regulatory zone, delineated by the State Geologist, within which site-specific geologic studies are required to identify and avoid fault rupture hazards prior to subdivision of land and/or construction of most structures for human occupancy.

Critical Facility: Facilities which either provide emergency services or house or serve many people who would be injured or killed in case of disaster damage to the facility. Examples include hospitals, fire, police, and emergency service facilities, utility "lifeline" facilities such as water, electricity, gas supply, sewage disposal, and communications and transportation facilities.

dB: Decibel; a unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear.

dBA: The "A-weighted" scale for measuring sound in decibels; weighs or reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing. Every increase of 10dBA doubles the perceived loudness though the noise is actually ten times more intense.

Fault: A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

Flood, 100-Year: The magnitude of a flood that has 1/100, or one percent chance of occurring in any given year.

Flood Hazard Area: Those areas subject to inundation by a 100-year flood, or subject to damage from shallow groundwater.

Geologic Hazards: Include the following:

- Seismic hazard areas delineated on fault maps as subject to potential surface rupture, on soil maps indicating materials particularly prone to shaking or liquefaction, and in local and regional seismic safety plans;
- Landslide hazard areas delineated on slope stability maps and in local and regional geologic or safety plans; and
- Other geologic hazards such as expansive soils and subsidence areas.

Hazardous Material: Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. The term includes, but is not limited to, hazardous substances and hazardous wastes. Examples include pesticides, herbicides, toxic metals and chemicals, liquefied natural gas, explosives, volatile chemicals, and nuclear fuels.

L_{dn} - Day-Night Average Sound Level. The A-weighted average sound level for a given area (measured in decibels) during a 24-hour period with a 10 dB weighting applied to night-time sound levels. The L_{dn} is approximately numerically equal to the CNEL for most environmental settings.

Levee: A bank constructed to control or confine flood waters.

Liquefaction: The transformation of loose water-saturated granular materials (such as sand or silt) from a solid into a liquid state. A type of ground failure that can occur during an earthquake.

Noise: Any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with speech and hearing, or is intense enough to damage hearing, or is otherwise annoying. Noise, simply, is "unwanted sound."

Noise Attenuation: Reduction of the level of a noise source using a substance, material, or surface, such as earth berms and/or solid concrete walls.

Seismic: Caused by or subject to earthquakes or earth vibrations.

Subsidence: The gradual local settling or sinking of the earth's surface with little or no horizontal motion (subsidence is usually the result of gas, oil, or water extraction, hydrocompaction, or peat oxidation, and not the result of a landslide or slope failure).

Wildland Fire: A fire occurring in a suburban or rural area which contains uncultivated lands, timber, range, watershed, brush, or grasslands. This includes areas where there is mingling of developed and undeveloped lands.

- Policy HS-A.2 The County shall, within its authority and to the best of its ability, ensure that emergency dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, communications systems, vital utilities, and other essential public facilities necessary for the continuity of government are designed in a manner that will allow them to remain operational during and following an earthquake or other disaster.
- Policy HS-A.3 The County shall ensure that the siting of critical emergency response facilities such as hospitals, fire stations, sheriffs' offices and substations, dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, and other emergency service facilities and utilities are sited and designed to minimize their exposure and susceptibility to flooding, seismic and geological effects, fire, avalanche, and explosions as required by State regulations. Exception to this policy shall be allowed on the condition that the only alternative location would be so distant as to jeopardize the safety of the community, given that precautions are taken to protect the facility.
- Policy HS-A.4 The County shall continue to conduct programs to inform the general public of emergency preparedness and disaster response procedures.

Implementation Programs

Program HS-A.A The County shall maintain agreements with other local, State, and Federal agencies to provide coordinated disaster response.

Responsibility: Sheriff's Office
County Administrative Officer
Public Works Department
County Fire District
County Office of Emergency Services

Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-A.B The County shall continue to monitor and periodically evaluate County emergency planning, operations, and training capabilities. (See Policy HS-A.1)

Responsibility: County Office of Emergency Services

Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-A.C The County shall continue to periodically evaluate County-owned safety and emergency management facilities and public utility systems for susceptibility to damage due to flood inundation or seismic or geologic hazards and implement corrective actions should problems be identified. (See Policies HS-A.2 and HS-A.3)

Responsibility: Public Works Department
Planning & Resource Management Department
County Office of Emergency Services

Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-A.D The County shall continue to conduct programs to inform the general public of emergency preparedness and disaster response procedures. (See Policy HS-A.4)

Responsibility: County Office of Emergency Services
 Time Frame: Ongoing

B. FIRE HAZARDS

Structural and wildland fire hazards can threaten life and property in Fresno County. Wildland fires resulting from either natural or manmade causes occur in forests, brush, grasslands, fallow agricultural areas, and vacant lots. Such fires are capable of causing widespread damage to Fresno County's valuable range and forest lands, in addition to threatening the lives and personal property of persons residing in wildfire-prone areas. Wildfires can also exacerbate air quality problems, particularly during the summer months when ambient air quality is already low. Structural fires generally result from manmade causes and can easily spread through densely-settled urban areas, causing large-scale loss of personal property, personal injury, and, occasionally, fatalities.

Policies in this section are designed to ensure that new development is constructed to minimize potential fire hazards, minimize the risk of fire in already developed areas, and to provide public education concerning fire prevention. Related policies are included in Section PF-H, Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services.

Goal HS-B To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and natural resources resulting from fire hazards.

Policies

- Policy HS-B.1 The County shall review project proposals to identify potential fire hazards and to evaluate the effectiveness of preventive measures to reduce the risk to life and property.
- Policy HS-B.2 The County shall ensure that development in high fire hazard areas is designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes the risk from fire hazards and meets all applicable State and County fire standards. Special consideration shall be given to the use of fire-resistant construction in the underside of eaves, balconies, unenclosed roofs and floors, and other similar horizontal surfaces in areas of steep slopes.
- Policy HS-B.3 The County shall require that development in high fire hazard areas have fire-resistant vegetation, cleared fire breaks separating communities or clusters of structures from native vegetation, or a long-term comprehensive vegetation and fuel management program. Fire hazard reduction measures shall be incorporated into the design of development projects in fire hazard areas.
- Policy HS-B.4 The County shall require that foothill and mountain subdivisions of more than four (4) parcels provide for safe and ready access for fire and other emergency equipment, for routes of escape that will safely handle evacuations, and for roads and streets designed to be compatible with topography while meeting fire safety needs.

- Policy HS-B.5 The County shall require development to have adequate access for fire and emergency vehicles and equipment. All major subdivisions shall have a minimum of two (2) points of ingress and egress.
- Policy HS-B.6 The County shall work with local fire protection agencies, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the U.S. Forest Service to promote the maintenance of existing fuel breaks and emergency access routes for effective fire suppression and in managing wildland fire hazards.
- Policy HS-B.7 The County shall require that community fire breaks be coordinated with overall fire break plans developed by the foothill and mountain fire agencies. Firebreak easements in subdivisions of more than four parcels or in built-up areas shall include access for firefighting personnel and motorized equipment. Easements shall be dedicated for this purpose.
- Policy HS-B.8 The County shall refer development proposals in the unincorporated county to the appropriate local fire agencies for review of compliance with fire safety standards. If dual responsibility exists, both agencies shall review and comment relative to their area of responsibility. If standards are different or conflicting, the more stringent standards shall apply.
- Policy HS-B.9 The County shall require that provisions for establishing year-round fire protection in foothill and mountain areas are developed where concentrations of population are such that structural fire protection is needed.
- Policy HS-B.10 The County shall ensure that existing and new buildings of public assembly incorporate adequate fire protection measures to reduce potential loss of life and property in accordance with State and local codes and ordinances.
- Policy HS-B.11 The County shall require new development to have water systems that meet County fire flow requirements. Where minimum fire flow is not available to meet County standards, alternate fire protection measures, including sprinkler systems, shall be identified and may be incorporated into development if approved by the appropriate fire protection agency.
- Policy HS-B.12 The County shall promote installation and maintenance of smoke detectors in existing residences and commercial facilities that were constructed prior to the requirement for their installation.
- Policy HS-B.13 The County shall work with local fire agencies to develop high-visibility fire prevention programs, including education programs and voluntary home inspections.

Implementation Programs

- Program HS-B.A The County shall review the design of all buildings and structures to ensure they are designed and constructed to State and local regulations and standards as part of the building permit plan check process. (See Policy HS-B.2)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
 Time Frame: Ongoing

C. FLOOD HAZARDS

Flooding is a natural occurrence in the Central Valley because it is the drainage basin for thousands of watershed acres of Sierra Nevada and Coast Range foothills and mountains. Flooding in Fresno County occurs primarily along the Kings River in the central-eastern portion of the county, some sections of the San Joaquin River, and many of the foothill streams along the east and west sides of the valley. A variety of mechanisms are currently employed to reduce flood damage in flood prone areas, including flood control reservoirs, levee systems, and watershed treatment.

Policies in this section are designed to minimize flood hazards by restricting development in flood prone areas, requiring development that does occur in floodplains to be designed to avoid flood damage, and through public education about flood hazards. Related policies are included in Section PF-E, Storm Drainage and Flood Control, and Section LU-C, River Influence Areas.

Goal HS-C To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage resulting from flood hazards.

Policies

- Policy HS-C.1 The County shall encourage the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District to control stormwater flows originating in the streams of the Fresno County Stream Group, generally located east and north of the Fresno-Clovis urban area, by dams or other storage means prior to entering the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan area.
- Policy HS-C.2 The County shall require that the design and location of dams and levees be in accordance with applicable design standards and specifications and accepted design and construction practices.
- Policy HS-C.3 The County shall promote a floodplain management approach in flood hazard areas that are presently undeveloped by giving priority to regulation of land uses over development of structural controls as a method of reducing flood damage.
- Policy HS-C.4 The County shall encourage the performance of appropriate investigations to determine the 100-year water surface elevations for the San Joaquin River, taking into account recent storm events and existing channel conditions, to identify the potential extent and risk of flooding. New development, including public infrastructure projects, shall not be allowed along the river until the risk of flooding at the site has been determined and appropriate flood risk reduction measures identified.
- Policy HS-C.5 Where existing development is located in a flood hazard area, the County shall require that construction of flood control facilities proceed only after a complete review of the environmental effects and a project cost/benefit analysis.

- Policy HS-C.6 The County shall promote flood control measures that maintain natural conditions within the 100-year floodplain of rivers and streams and, to the extent possible, combine flood control, recreation, water quality, and open space functions. Existing irrigation canals shall be used to the extent possible to remove excess stormwater. Retention-recharge basins should be located to best utilize natural drainage patterns.
- Policy HS-C.7 The County shall continue to participate in the Federal Flood Insurance Program by ensuring compliance with applicable requirements.
- Policy HS-C.8 During the building permit review process, the County shall ensure project compliance with applicable Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards pertaining to residential and non-residential development in the floodplain, floodway, or floodway fringe.
- Policy HS-C.9 The County shall prohibit the construction of essential facilities in the 100-year floodplain, unless it can be demonstrated that the facility can be safely operated and accessed during flood events.
- Policy HS-C.10 The County shall require that all placement of structures and/or floodproofing be done in a manner that will not cause floodwaters to be diverted onto adjacent property, increase flood hazards to other property, or otherwise adversely affect other property.
- Policy HS-C.11 The County shall encourage open space uses in all flood hazard areas. Land Conservation contracts and open space and scenic easements should be made available to property owners.
- Policy HS-C.12 The County shall consider dam failure inundation maps of all reservoirs in making land use and related decisions.
- Policy HS-C.13 The County shall continue public awareness programs to inform the general public and potentially affected property owners of flood hazards and potential dam failure inundation.

Implementation Programs

Program HS-C.A The County shall continue to participate in the Federal Flood Insurance Program. The County shall maintain flood hazard maps and other relevant floodplain data and shall revise or update this information as new information becomes available. In the County's review of applications for building permits and discretionary permits and proposals for capital improvement projects, the County shall determine whether the proposed project is within the 100-year floodplain based on these maps. (See Policy HS-C.7)

Responsibility: Public Works Department
Planning & Resource Management Department
Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-C.B The County shall continue to implement and enforce its Floodplain Management Ordinance. (See Policy HS-C.8)

Responsibility: Public Works Department
Planning & Resource Management Department
Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-C.C The County shall continue to develop and review relevant dam failure evacuation plans and continue to provide public information on dam failure preparedness. (See Policy HS-C.13)

Responsibility: Public Works Department
County Office of Emergency Services
Time Frame: Ongoing

D. SEISMIC AND GEOLOGICAL HAZARDS

There are a number of active and potentially-active faults within and adjacent to Fresno County. Although most of Fresno County is situated within an area of relatively low seismic activity by comparison to other areas of the state, the faults and fault systems that lie along the eastern and western boundaries of the county, as well as other regional faults, have the potential to produce high-magnitude earthquakes throughout the county. The principle earthquake hazard is groundshaking. Older buildings constructed before building codes were established and newer buildings constructed before earthquake-resistant provisions were included in the building codes are the most likely to be damaged during an earthquake. Other geologic hazards in Fresno County include landslides, subsidence, expansive soils and erosion, and volcanic hazards.

Policies in this section seek to ensure that new buildings and facilities are designed to withstand seismic and geologic hazards.

Goal HS-D To minimize the loss of life, injury, and property damage due to seismic and geologic hazards.

Policies

Policy HS-D.1 The County shall continue to support scientific geologic investigations that refine, enlarge, and improve the body of knowledge on active fault zones, unstable areas, severe groundshaking, avalanche potential, and other hazardous geologic conditions in Fresno County.

Policy HS-D.2 The County shall ensure that the General Plan and/or County Ordinance Code is revised, as necessary, to incorporate geologic hazard areas formally designated by the State Geologist (e.g., Earthquake Fault Zones and Seismic Hazard Zones). Development in such areas, including public infrastructure projects, shall not be allowed until compliance with the investigation and mitigation requirements established by the State Geologist can be demonstrated.

Policy HS-D.3 The County shall require that a soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis be prepared by a California-registered engineer or engineering geologist prior to permitting development, including public infrastructure

projects, in areas prone to geologic or seismic hazards (i.e., fault rupture, groundshaking, lateral spreading, lurchcracking, fault creep, liquefaction, subsidence, settlement, landslides, mudslides, unstable slopes, or avalanche).

- Policy HS-D.4 The County shall require all proposed structures, additions to structures, utilities, or public facilities situated within areas subject to geologic-seismic hazards as identified in the soils engineering and geologic-seismic analysis to be sited, designed, and constructed in accordance with applicable provisions of the Uniform Building Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and other relevant professional standards to minimize or prevent damage or loss and to minimize the risk to public safety.
- Policy HS-D.5 Pursuant to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Public Resources Code, Chapter 7.5), the County shall not permit any structure for human occupancy to be placed within designated Earthquake Fault Zones unless the specific provisions of the Act and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations have been satisfied.
- Policy HS-D.6 The County shall inventory unreinforced masonry structures, including emergency facilities and other critical facilities constructed prior to 1948, used for human occupancy (excluding single-family residential structures), and evaluate the facilities for seismic safety. If found below acceptable standards, the County shall implement a program to mitigate potential hazards.
- Policy HS-D.7 The County shall ensure compliance with State seismic and building standards in the evaluation, design, and siting of critical facilities, including police and fire stations, school facilities, hospitals, hazardous material manufacture and storage facilities, bridges, large public assembly halls, and other structures subject to special seismic safety design requirements.
- Policy HS-D.8 The County shall require a soils report by a California-registered engineer or engineering geologist for any proposed development, including public infrastructure projects, that requires a County permit and is located in an area containing soils with high “expansive” or “shrink-swell” properties. Development in such areas shall be prohibited unless suitable design and construction measures are incorporated to reduce the potential risks associated with these conditions.
- Policy HS-D.9 The County shall seek to minimize soil erosion by maintaining compatible land uses, suitable building designs, and appropriate construction techniques. Contour grading, where feasible, and revegetation shall be required to mitigate the appearance of engineered slopes and to control erosion.
- Policy HS-D.10 The County shall require the preparation of drainage plans for development or public infrastructure projects in hillside areas to direct runoff and drainage away from unstable slopes.
- Policy HS-D.11 The County shall not approve a County permit for new development, including public infrastructure projects where slopes are over thirty (30) percent unless it can be demonstrated by a California-registered civil

engineer or engineering geologist that hazards to public safety will be reduced to acceptable levels.

- Policy HS-D.12 In known or potential landslide hazard areas, the County shall prohibit avoidable alteration of land in a manner that could increase the hazard, including concentration of water through drainage, irrigation, or septic systems, undercutting the bases of slopes, removal of vegetative cover, and steepening of slopes.
- Policy HS-D.13 The County shall not approve a County permit for new development, including public infrastructure projects, in known or potential avalanche hazard areas unless it can be demonstrated by a California-registered engineer or engineering geologist that the structures will be safe under anticipated snow loads and avalanche conditions.
- Policy HS-D.14 Whenever zoning is employed to restrict the use of land subject to severe geologic hazards (e.g., landslides), the County shall designate parcels so restricted for open space uses.
- Policy HS-D.15 The County Board of Review or other subsequently-appointed body shall serve as the review body on appeals from seismic and geologic hazard requirements.

Implementation Programs

Program HS-D.A The County shall regularly review readily available information published by the California Division of Mines and Geology and other agencies and use the information to update County maps and the General Plan Background Report. (See Policies HS-D.1 and HS-D.2)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Public Works Department

Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-D.B The County shall inventory unreinforced masonry structures, including emergency facilities and other critical facilities constructed prior to 1948, used for human occupancy (excluding single-family residential structures), and evaluate the facilities for seismic safety. If found below acceptable standards, the County shall implement a program to mitigate potential hazards.

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Public Works Department

Time Frame: FY 02-03; 03-04

Program HS-D.C The County shall develop a public awareness program to aid in the identification and mitigation of unreinforced masonry structures. (See Policy HS-D.6)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department

Time Frame: FY 02-03

E. AIRPORT HAZARDS

Airport safety hazards include hazards posed to aircraft and hazards posed by aircraft to people and property on the ground. With proper land use planning, aircraft safety risks can be reduced, primarily by avoiding incompatible land uses.

Policies in this section are designed to minimize public exposure to risks associated with airport operations and to minimize the siting of land uses near airports that might interfere with airport operations. Related policies are included in Section HS-F, Hazardous Materials, and Section HS-G, Noise.

Goal HS-E To minimize the exposure of the public to high noise levels and safety hazards through land use controls and policies for property in the vicinity of airports; and to limit urban encroachment around airports in order to preserve the safety of flight operations and the continued viability of airport facilities.

Policies

Policy HS-E.1 The County shall review the Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission's Airport Land Use Policy Plans (CLUPPs) to determine the appropriate land uses around airports. The County shall limit land uses in airport safety zones to those uses listed in the applicable CLUPPs as compatible uses. Exceptions shall be made only as provided for in the CLUPPs. Such uses shall also be regulated to ensure compatibility in terms of location, height, and noise.

Policy HS-E.2 The County shall ensure that new development, including public infrastructure projects, does not create safety hazards such as glare from direct or reflective sources, smoke, electrical interference, hazardous chemicals, or fuel storage in violation of adopted safety standards.

Policy HS-E.3 The County shall ensure that development, including public infrastructure projects, within the airport approach and departure zones complies with Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Administration Regulations (Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace).

Implementation Programs

Program HS-E.A The County shall refer to the Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission for review projects within the Airport Review Area requiring amendments of general, community and specific plans, airport master plans, rezoning applications, zoning ordinance text amendments, and building code amendments for consistency with the appropriate Airport Land Use Policy Plan.

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission
Time Frame: Ongoing

F. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous waste handlers and generators in Fresno County include industries, businesses, public and private institutions, and households. The transport, storage, use, and disposal of toxic or hazardous materials poses potential safety hazards in the event of unintentional exposure, leak, fire, or accident.

Policies in this section are designed to ensure that development projects minimize public risks associated with both intended and unintended exposure to hazardous materials and wastes. Related policies are included in Section HS-A, Emergency Management and Response.

Goal HS-F To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, serious illness, and damage to property resulting from the use, transport, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes.

Policies

Policy HS-F.1 The County shall require that facilities that handle hazardous materials or hazardous wastes be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with applicable hazardous materials and waste management laws and regulations.

Policy HS-F.2 The County shall require that applications for discretionary development projects that will use hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste in large quantities include detailed information concerning hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage.

Policy HS-F.3 The County, through its Hazardous Materials Incident Response Plan, shall coordinate and cooperate with emergency response agencies to ensure adequate countywide response to hazardous materials incidents.

Policy HS-F.4 For redevelopment or infill projects or where past site uses suggest environmental impairment, the County shall require that an investigation be performed to identify the potential for soil or groundwater contamination. In the event soil or groundwater contamination is identified or could be encountered during site development, the County shall require a plan that identifies potential risks and actions to mitigate those risks prior to, during, and after construction.

Policy HS-F.5 The County shall require that demolition of structures where friable asbestos or other hazardous materials could be released into the environment comply with applicable regulations and standards.

Policy HS-F.6 The County shall work cooperatively with the State Department of Toxic Substances Control and Regional Water Quality Control Board to promote the timely and efficient cleanup of contaminated sites under the regulatory oversight of these agencies.

Policy HS-F.7 The County shall ensure that the mining and processing of minerals in the County is conducted in compliance with applicable environmental protection standards.

Policy HS-F.8 The County shall encourage and promote household hazardous waste information and collection programs.

Implementation Programs

Program HS-F.A The County shall review discretionary uses which involve use of hazardous materials or generate hazardous wastes in regulated quantities. (See Policy HS-F.2)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Department of Community Health
Time Frame: Ongoing

Program HS-F.B The County shall investigate funding alternatives for site acquisition, development, and operation for a permanent household waste facility.

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Time Frame: FY 01-02

Program HS-F.C The County shall review the plans to mitigate soil or groundwater contamination for redevelopment or infill projects. (See Policy HS-F.4)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Department of Community Health
Time Frame: Ongoing

G. NOISE

Noise is subjectively defined as unwanted sound. Noise can result from many sources, including traffic on freeways and other roads, railroad operations, aircraft, and industrial activities. Exposure to excessive noise is often cited as a health problem, primarily in terms of its contribution to undue stress and annoyance. The Background Report includes an analysis of major noise sources in the county and noise contours along major traffic corridors.

Policies in this section set noise standards and seek to protect noise-sensitive uses from excessive noise either through noise-reducing project design features or by allowing noise-sensitive land uses to only locate in areas with ambient noise levels below specific thresholds. Related policies are included in Section LU-D, Westside Freeway Corridor, and Section LU-F, Urban Development Patterns.

Goal HS-G To protect residential and other noise-sensitive uses from exposure to harmful or annoying noise levels; to identify maximum acceptable noise levels compatible with various land use designations; and to develop a policy framework necessary to achieve and maintain a healthful noise environment.

Policies

Policy HS-G.1 The County shall require that all proposed development incorporate design elements necessary to minimize adverse noise impacts on surrounding land uses.

- Policy HS-G.2 The County shall require new roadway improvement projects to achieve and maintain the normally acceptable noise levels shown in Chart HS-1: “Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments.”
- Policy HS-G.3 The County shall allow the development of new noise-sensitive land uses (which include, but are not limited to, residential neighborhoods, schools, and hospitals) only in areas where existing or projected noise levels are “acceptable” according to the Chart HS-1: “Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments.” Noise mitigation measures may be required to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas and interior spaces to these levels.
- Policy HS-G.4 So that noise mitigation may be considered in the design of new projects, the County shall require an acoustical analysis as part of the environmental review process where:
- a. Noise sensitive land uses are proposed in areas exposed to existing or projected noise levels that are “generally unacceptable” or higher according to the Chart HS-1: “Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments;”
 - b. Proposed projects are likely to produce noise levels exceeding the levels shown in the County’s Noise Control Ordinance at existing or planned noise-sensitive uses.
- Policy HS-G.5 Where noise mitigation measures are required to achieve acceptable levels according to land use compatibility or the Noise Control Ordinance, the County shall place emphasis of such measures upon site planning and project design. These measures may include, but are not limited to, building orientation, setbacks, earthen berms, and building construction practices. The County shall consider the use of noise barriers, such as soundwalls, as a means of achieving the noise standards after other design-related noise mitigation measures have been evaluated or integrated into the project.
- Policy HS-G.6 The County shall regulate construction-related noise to reduce impacts on adjacent uses in accordance with the County’s Noise Control Ordinance.
- Policy HS-G.7 Where existing noise-sensitive uses may be exposed to increased noise levels due to roadway improvement projects, the County shall apply the following criteria to determine the significance of the impact:
- a. Where existing noise levels are less than 60 dBLdn at outdoor activity areas of noise-sensitive uses, a 5 dBLdn increase in noise levels will be considered significant;
 - b. Where existing noise levels are between 60 and 65 dBLdn at outdoor activity areas of noise-sensitive uses, a 3 dBLdn increase in noise levels will be considered significant; and
 - c. Where existing noise levels are greater than 65 dBLdn at outdoor activity areas of noise-sensitive uses, a 1.5 dBLdn increase in noise levels will be considered significant.

- Policy HS-G.8 The County shall evaluate the compatibility of proposed projects with existing and future noise levels through a comparison to Chart HS-1, "Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments."
- Policy HS-G.9 The County shall not allow the development of new residential land uses in areas exposed to existing or projected levels of noise from aircraft operations at any airport or air base which exceed 60 dBLdn or CNEL.

Implementation Programs

Program HS-G.A The County shall amend and enforce the Fresno County Noise Ordinance as necessary consistent with the policies and standards within this element. (See Policies HS-G.1 through HS-G.9)

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Department of Community Health
Time Frame: FY 01-02

Program HS-G.B The County shall develop an effective noise control program that includes:

- a. An ordinance (1) defining acceptable noise levels based on land use, (2) setting forth monitoring methodology and determination of violations, (3) defining exemptions and variance procedures, and (4) delineating enforcement and abatement procedures; and
- b. A public information program to inform county residents of the impact of noise on their lives.

Responsibility: Planning & Resource Management Department
Department of Community Health
Time Frame: FY 01-02

